

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for distributing print media comprising:
5 an accumulator pivotable about an axis, the accumulator having a print media inlet and a print media outlet;
an actuator configured to pivot the accumulator about the axis.
- 10 2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the actuator further comprises a motor.
3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein:
15 the accumulator comprises a staging location configured to support at least a portion of a print media; and
the accumulator receives the print media and supports at least a portion of the print media at the staging location.
- 20 4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the surface area of the staging location is less than the size of the print media.
- 25 5. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising at least one input roller that transports the print media to a staging location in the accumulator.
- 30 6. The apparatus of claim 5 further comprising a movable belt having a protrusion that engages the print media and dispenses the print media through the print media outlet and out of the accumulator.

7. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a controller operatively coupled to the actuator.

5 8. The apparatus of claim 6 further comprising:
a controller operatively coupled to at least one of the actuator, the input rollers and the belt to coordinate the movement of print media through the accumulator.

10 9. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the accumulator further comprises a belt having a protrusion that transports the print media out of accumulator through the print media outlet.

15 10. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the actuator comprises a gear assembly for transferring rotational movement from the motor to the accumulator.

20 11. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
a registration roller that moves the print media against a registration wall to align an edge of the print media; and
a finishing device disposed inside the accumulator to perform a finishing operation on the print media.

25 12. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
a first output bin and a second output bin which receive print media discharged from the accumulator; and
30 the first output bin and the second output bin are stationary relative to the axis.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the first output bin is aligned adjacent to a first location and the second output bin is aligned adjacent to a second location to receive print media from the print media outlet of the accumulator.

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14. An apparatus for distributing print media comprising:
an accumulator having a print media inlet and a print media outlet,
the accumulator pivoting about an axis of rotation; and
means for rotating the accumulator about the axis.

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15. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein:
the accumulator comprises a staging location to receive the print media; and
the staging location has a surface area that is less than the surface area of a
predetermined size of the print media that is received by the accumulator.

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16. The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising means for transporting
the print media through the accumulator.

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17. The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising means for transporting
the print media out of the outlet of the accumulator.

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18. The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising means for activating the
means for rotating the accumulator about the axis.

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19. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the means for activating the means for rotating the accumulator is also a means for activating the means for transporting the print media through the accumulator and a means for activating the means for transporting the print media out of the outlet of the accumulator.

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20. The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising:

a means for aligning the print media inside the accumulator for aligning the print media; and

10 a finishing means for performing a finishing operation on the print media.

21. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the apparatus for dispensing print media further comprises:

15 a first output bin and a second output bin positioned to receive print media dispensed from the accumulator; and

the first output bin and the second output bin are stationary relative to the axis.

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22. The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the first output bin is aligned adjacent to a first location and the second output bin is aligned adjacent to a second location to receive print media from the print media outlet of the accumulator.

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23. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the accumulator is sized such that at least a first portion of a sheet of the print media is supported by the accumulator and at least a second portion of a sheet of the print media is supported by the first output bin during accumulation of the print media.

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24. A method for distributing print media comprising:
aligning an accumulator with a first location;
receiving print media through an inlet of the accumulator;
dispensing the print media through an outlet of the accumulator at the first

5 location;

rotating the accumulator about an axis of rotation to align the accumulator
with a second location.

10 25. The method of claim 24 further comprising, supporting a portion of the
print media on a staging location in the accumulator.

26. The method of claim 24 further comprising:
15 receiving sheets of the print media sequentially through the inlet; and
accumulating sheets of the print media in the accumulator before dispensing
the sheets of the print media through the outlet of the accumulator.

20 27. The method of claim 24 further comprising, transporting the sheets of
the print media from the inlet of the accumulator to a staging location in the
accumulator prior to dispensing the sheets of the print media.

25 28. The method of claim 27 further comprising, registering the sheets of
the print media after the sheets of the print media is transported to the staging
location.

30 29. The method of claim 28 further comprising, finishing the registered
sheets of the print media in the staging location with a finishing device.

30. The method of claim 24 further comprising:

positioning print media received at the inlet such that a portion of the print media is supported by a staging location in the accumulator and a portion of the print media is supported by an output bin; and

5 accumulating the print media prior to dispensing the print media from the accumulator.

31. A printing apparatus comprising:

10 an image-forming device;

an accumulator pivotable about an axis, and configured to receive print media from the image-forming device;

an actuator configured to pivot the accumulator about the axis.

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32. The printing apparatus of claim 31, wherein the accumulator is configured to support at least a portion of the print media at a staging location.

20 33. The printing apparatus of claim 32, wherein the surface area of the staging location is less than the surface area of the print media.

25 34. The printing apparatus of claim 31, wherein the actuator further comprises a motor.

30 35. The printing apparatus of claim 34, wherein the actuator comprises a gear assembly for transferring rotational movement from the motor to the accumulator.

36. The printing apparatus of claim 31, further comprising a controller operatively coupled to the actuator.

37. The printing apparatus of claim 31, further comprising:
a first output bin aligned adjacent to a first location to receive print media
from the accumulator;
a second output bin aligned adjacent to a second location to receive print
5 media from the accumulator; and
the first output bin and the second output bin are stationary relative to the
axis.

10 38. The printing apparatus of claim 37 wherein the accumulator is sized to
support a first portion of a sheet of the print media and the first output bin supports
a second portion of a sheet of the print media.

15 39. The printing apparatus of claim 31 further comprising a finishing
device to perform a finishing operation on the print media.

20 40. The printing apparatus of claim 39, wherein the finishing device is a
stapler integrated within the accumulator.